

asked only

UArgentina

8/10/82

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MASS GRAVES OF "DISAPPEARED" IN ARGENTINA

Q: What is the Administration's response to reports that graves of over 1,000 "disappeared persons" have recently been discovered in Argentina?

A: The story of the "disappeared" in Argentina is a very tragic one. ^{12.1.82} This Administration and previous ones have expressed our ~~concern~~ ^{Concern} at what happened. I would note that there were no new disappearances and no new political prisoners taken in 1982*. The human rights situation there has shown substantial improvement: (1) The government has committed itself to elections and a return to democratic government by March of 1984; (2) about 40 percent of Argentina's "PEN" political prisoners were set free this year (300 freed, 376 still detained) while press and party activity has greatly expanded.**

* One political kidnapping/killing, the DuPont case, was not carried out by the Government (probably by a right wing para-military group) and greatly embarrassed the government.

** NOTE: Several small publications were closed down recently but the overall level of press freedom is much greater than in past years.

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Clearance: ARA:

HA:

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

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